

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Dental Crafters Inc.

#### Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center

#### Dental Crafters, Inc. Gets Jump Start from Lean Initiatives

##### Client Profile:

Dental Crafters, Inc., founded in 1989, produces crowns, bridges, cosmetic dentistry, implants, and dentures for dental providers. The company employs 14 people at its facility in Marshfield, Wisconsin.

##### Situation:

Dental Crafter's business was doing well; however, some manufacturing issues and bottlenecks were preventing the company from completing orders on time. When co-owner Bob Slominski saw a brochure for an upcoming Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, Manufacturing Advantage Conference, his interest in Lean manufacturing was piqued. Sominski attended the conference and made contact with NWMOC Project Manager Ted Theyerl, after which he decided to enlist the services of NWMOC.

##### Solution:

NWMOC Project Managers Ted Theyerl and Jerry Day worked with Slominski to help Dental Crafters become more 'Lean' in their processes. NWMOC conducted a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) project with 10 of Dental Crafters' production staff, during which they mapped out their current state and their desired 'future state.' NWMOC then conducted a Lean with Legos workshop for all employees. NWMOC project managers helped assess the workflow through the lab, reduce batch sizes, develop cycle times, and identify labor needs. As a result of NWMOC's assistance, Work in Process was reduced from 470 to 160 cases. The Lean training also proved valuable in determining what type of new computer system would best fit the company's needs. Dental Crafter's Chief Financial Officer Amy Nystrom said, "They [NWMOC] gave us the jump start we needed!"

##### Results:

- \* Reduced remakes by 42 percent, saving \$30,000 in 5 months.
- \* Reduced quality calls by 87 percent.
- \* Reduced turnaround time by 33 percent.
- \* Reduced overtime hours, saving \$20,000 in one year.
- \* Improved employee morale.
- \* Created 1 job.

##### Testimonial:

"For the money we spent, I can't think of anything that's been more beneficial with immediate improvements on our bottom line."

Bob Slominski, Co-owner

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